



## U.S. Department of Justice

United States Attorney  
District of New Hampshire

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Federal Building  
53 Pleasant Street, 4<sup>th</sup> Floor  
Concord, New Hampshire 03301

603/225-1552

**MEDIA RELEASE**  
**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
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Contact: **Thomas P. Colantuono**  
**United States Attorney**  
**Mark S. Zuckerman**  
**Assistant U.S. Attorney**  
**(603) 225-1552**

### **CHICAGO MAN AND NEW YORK WOMAN PLEAD GUILTY TO MAKING MATERIALLY FALSE STATEMENTS ON PASSPORT APPLICATIONS**

**CONCORD, NEW HAMPSHIRE** – United States Attorney Tom Colantuono reports that two people entered guilty pleas in U.S. District Court in Concord to making materially false statements on applications for United States passports.

Yesterday, 33-year-old Fadil Muratoski of Mount Prospect, Illinois pled guilty to falsely stating on a passport application that he was born in Ohio, when, in fact he was born in the former Yugoslavia.

Today, 40-year-old Georgette Pearson of New Rochelle, New York, pled guilty to falsely stating on a passport application that she was born in Florida, when, in fact, she was born in Jamaica.

By claiming that they were born in the United States, Muratoski and Pearson indicated that they were United States citizens and were eligible to receive United States passports. Both passport applications were filed with the National Passport Center in Portsmouth, New Hampshire, where examiners detected the fraudulent statements.

Sentencing hearings were scheduled for September 1, 2005, for Pearson, and September 14, 2005, for Muratoski. Both are facing a possible prison sentence of up to five years and a fine of up to \$250,000.00.

This case resulted from an ongoing initiative known as "Operation Checkmate" which is designed to identify false passport applications that are submitted for adjudication to the National Passport Center in Portsmouth, New Hampshire. The National Passport Center processes and adjudicates approximately two million applications each year, or one quarter of all United States passport applications. Operation Checkmate is a joint initiative of the U.S. Attorney's Office for

the District of New Hampshire, the U.S. Department of State Diplomatic Security Service, the Social Security Administration Office of Inspector General and the Department of Homeland Security's Bureau of Immigration and Customs Enforcement.

U.S. Attorney Colantuono stated: "The United States Passport is the gold standard of travel documents. Accordingly, fraud in the acquisition or use of a United States Passport is a matter of grave concern as it has implications for our nation's security. This office will do everything possible to make sure that those who misrepresent their citizenship in or otherwise falsify passport applications are prosecuted. In prosecuting these cases, we hope to send a message of general deterrence to those who would engage in passport fraud."

These cases were investigated by the Diplomatic Security Service of the United States Department of State. They are being prosecuted by Assistant United States Attorney Mark S. Zuckerman.

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